

EMILY C. MERRIMAN.

JANUARY 22, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. McCLELLAN, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 6057.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6057) granting a pension to Emily C. Merriman, having considered the same, respectfully report:

Mrs. Merriman is the widow of Capt. Edgar C. Merriman, U. S. N., who died at Yonkers, N. Y., December 11, 1894. He had been retired September 28, 1891, with the rank of captain in the Navy, after thirty-three years of service. The cause of retirement was failing eyesight originating in the line of duty.

He was made an active midshipman in 1857, but resigned in November, 1860, supposing that he was about to die of consumption. On the breaking out of war he tendered his services to the Government and was put in charge of a mortar schooner below New Orleans. He participated in the engagements of the forts, was afterwards on blockade duty, and served faithfully throughout the war. He was commissioned a lieutenant in the Navy March 27, 1865, and pursued his profession diligently up to the date of retirement. His capacity and fidelity as an officer are illustrated by the statement of a distinguished rear-admiral, in the following letter:

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 6, 1896.

MY DEAR SIR: Understanding that Mrs. Merriman, widow of the late Captain Merriman, U. S. N., is endeavoring to obtain a pension, I beg to say in her behalf that her husband was under my command on board the U. S. S. *Florida* during the rebellion. While on the blockade off Wilmington, N. C., he was the executive officer of the vessel, and was of great assistance to me in taking care of the ship. The work on the blockade was very arduous, particularly during the winter, as our station was on the inshore blockade, which necessitated our being within sight of the breakers during the night to prevent the blockade runners going into Wilmington. The *Florida* participated in the destruction of several vessels, and on one occasion, in the early morning, the *Florida* alone destroyed two valuable blockade runners which were attempting to pass between her and the beach about daylight. This work required quick action, and was accomplished before breakfast, and the efficiency of the *Florida* was owing, in a great measure, to Mr. Merriman, then a lieutenant and the executive officer; and I truly hope that the application of Mrs. Merriman for a pension may be granted.

Very truly, yours,

PEIRCE CROSBY,
Rear-Admiral, U. S. N.

Mr. FRANK W. HACKETT.

Edgar C. Merriman was appointed acting midshipman November 21, 1857. He resigned, and his resignation was accepted, November 7, 1860, on account of premonitory symptoms of consumption, and it was

then thought he would die of that disease. He recovered somewhat, and was reappointed as acting master on December 3, 1861, and was continually in service until his death. During 1859 and 1860 he was sick on twelve different occasions, with catarrh generally, and was frequently excused. The hospital steward said he was almost always under treatment for scrofulous condition. The record shows treatment on numerous occasions for catarrhus, tonsillitis, constipation, scrofulous enlargement and induration of cervical glands, neuralgia, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, rheumatism, pleurisy in 1872, from exposure on deck; palpitatio diphtheria in 1885, on duty; bronchitis in 1887, while on duty, from climate; pharyngitis in 1888, while on duty; cholera morbus in 1890; diarrhea in 1891; amaurosis in 1891, all in line of duty. He died from pneumonia.

Claimant was married to soldier March 4, 1869. She applied for pension for herself and four minor children; but her claim was rejected February 25, 1896, on the ground that her husband's death was not due to active service, he having been retired three years before his death.

The widow has a large family of daughters to care for and has very little income, and your committee believe that his service of thirty-three years, most of which was active and arduous, with the changes of climate, contributed largely to rendering him susceptible to the fatal disease, and we think his record clearly supports this theory; and, in view of his gallant and meritorious service and necessitous condition of his family, recommend the passage of the bill after being amended by striking out the word "fifty," in line 8, and inserting "thirty" in lieu thereof, and by striking out all of the printed bill after the word "children," in line 9.

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